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DAJANI, PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, ON FUTURE PROSPECTS

Beirut MONDAY MORNING in English 17-23 Dec 79 pp 18-26

[Interview of Ahmad Dajani, PLO executive Committee member, by Claude Khoury, date and place not given]

[Text]

The world of 1980: how does the Palestine Liberation Organization view it?

How does the PLO view its prospects for next year — in its relations with the two super powers, with Western Europe, with Japan?

What about the delicate question of its presence in Lebanon, where a quadripartite Arab committee is now busy trying to implement last month's Arab summit resolutions and colliding with Lebanese-Palestinian differences on how the implementation should start?

And where does the PLO think it is headed in its relations with Iran — considering the tension between the Iranian Revolution and a number of Arabian Gulf states?

Questions revolving around these themes were put by *Monday Morning* last week to Dr. Ahmad Sodki Dajani, member of the PLO Executive Committee and the PLO man in the Euro-Arab dialogue.

The following article is a translated transcription of his replies:

As we stand on the threshold of the new year, you ask me if the PLO has any specific goals for 1980. Will next year be a year of waiting for the results of the American Presidential elections, or will it be a year of Palestinian moves in the direction of the United States via Western Europe?

I go beyond those two possibilities for the year 1980, because the PLO has many other options, all springing from a fact which we are constantly stressing, namely: that the PLO, as the manifestation of the Palestinian Revolution, always bases its moves on the logic of concrete developments. This logic means that PLO

action is decided by an understanding of the "givens" surrounding the PLO.

Much is being said about the year 1980, on the international, Arab and Palestinian levels. The task of the Palestinian leadership is to analyze this situation in all its dimensions and then move on to action. It follows that next year will not be a year of waiting for the American elections, nor will PLO action be limited to a move in one direction or another. The PLO will move in various arenas toward the achievement of its goals.

That is the general picture, but to go into more detail: what is our conception of the 1980 situation? An objective analysis of international realities at this time leads us to the following observations:

The first observation relates to the two super powers.

SOVIET UNION

There are studies which indicate that the Soviet Union is watching developments in our world with interest, and that it is pausing to consider the stage which international detente has reached. I make special reference here to the speech delivered by President Brezhnev in East Berlin on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the rise of East Germany. Since I was among those who accompanied Brother Abu Ammar to those celebrations, I had the opportunity to hear the speech directly and watch the military parade that was staged on that occasion, and I would like to mention here that the first stage of what President Brezhnev promised was executed only two days ago.

We note also that the Soviet Union is watching, closely and with great interest, the developments that are occurring in Iran and in what has come to be known in some Western circles as the "Crisis Crescent," which stretches from Afghanistan to the Horn of Africa.

A number of analysts also point to what is going on inside the Soviet Union, regarding leadership, candidacy to the Central Committee, and so on.

All this leads us to the conclusion that where the Soviet Union is concerned, there is a continuation along the detente line, with pauses to consider the nature and possible solutions of the problems which are causing tension in our world.

Within this conception of the Soviet Union, we the PLO are maintaining the line of friendly cooperation with the Soviet Union, as indicated by the constant contacts between us.

UNITED STATES

Where the United States is concerned, before we consider the fact that 1980 will be an election year, there is one observation we must make: that the American Administration in 1979 obviously suffered from great indecision, which some in the West perceived as virtual helplessness, and which was most clearly manifested in our region.

The course of developments in this region has underscored a certain attitude toward the United States, an attitude characterized by extreme reticence. The American Administration has not yet paused to analyze the reasons for this, perhaps, but we in the PLO believe that one of the major reasons is President Carter's position on the Palestinian issue, especially in the Camp David agreement. President Carter has violated the concept of self-determination and human rights values in this matter. The effects of this violation can be seen in the entire region.

At any rate, the United States' indecision — or its helplessness, as some in Europe describe it — will carry over into 1980, and we must take it into consideration.

Some observers who are studying the United States in greater depth note that, perhaps for the first time, people who are

watching the development of U.S. policy are unable to piece together a clear picture of that policy. This is because the decision-making process has been distributed among many forces, and there is now an obvious struggle between the Administration, its various agencies, and the other political forces which used to lead the administration in the past — notably Kissinger and Rockefeller. This became particularly obvious in America's approach to the problem of the Shah and its dealing with the Iranian crisis.

WESTERN EUROPE

Western Europe in the meantime is preoccupied with a number of serious problems, one of these being the energy problem and another being the problem of detente. We note that President Brezhnev's speech in East Germany has drawn different reactions from various West European countries: Mr. Schmidt, for instance, reacted calmly, but Mrs. Thatcher's reaction was violent. West Germany is insisting on continuing the eastern-oriented policy launched by Brandt in the early 1970's, but the Conservative Party in Britain is considering a number of problems relating to European security, the connection of that security with NATO and the U.S., and the position of Britain in Europe.

We conclude from this that there is a trend in Europe toward an independent European role. That role can never be of a nature that would bring it into conflict with the U.S., but at the same time, it may not be totally dominated by the U.S. This is important to understand. When we consider a move toward Europe, we take into consideration the possibility that such a role will emerge.

This became clear to us in our conversations with the Belgian foreign minister, Mr. Henri Simonet, and the Italian foreign minister, Mr. Francesco Malfatti. The two ministers told us that the

European Common Market was trying to develop a joint policy. The development of a joint policy for nine states is no easy matter, but recent years have established that it is possible, despite the difficulties. The features of this policy have taken shape on the issue of energy, and we are trying to make its features clearer on the issue of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

So much for those three powers.

THIRD WORLD

Where the Third World is concerned, we still strongly believe that it has a role to play in our lives. The Palestinian Revolution is the core of the Arab nation, and the Arab nation is the core of the Third World. This world may be poor financially, but it is rich in raw materials. It may be suffering from scientific underdevelopment and the effects of an era of imperialist domination, but it has potentials that must be taken into account.

Political analysts would be mistaken if they did not take into account the current spiritual revival. That is what I call it — "spiritual revival" — and in our Arab Islamic civilization, it takes the form of Islamic revival, Christian revival, the revival of the spiritual values of both. This is something that Western civilization, dominated as it is by materialism, has not fully realized. It is a phenomenon that we must recognize and make use of, both to help us solve our problems in the region and to help our world arrive at sound values which can extricate it from the value crisis through which it is passing and to which many of the evils we are suffering can be attributed.

Some Western researchers are now referring to the "Fourth World," drawing a distinction between the Third World countries which have oil and financial wealth and those that do not. I am among those who believe that wealth is not oil;

that the wealth of any society is its people, its capabilities, its institutions and all the ideas that are in it; that oil and material wealth is a limited resource occurring in a specific period of time. We may accept this division of the Third World for the purpose of dealing with the problem of rising oil prices, but in the final analysis, we perceive a basic solidarity within the Third World in its cultural background and its capability to influence developments in our world. The Palestinian Revolution is fully aware of this, and our reactions to the developments and the various revolutions and liberation movements in the Third World spring from this awareness.

ISRAEL

Finally, something must be said about what is happening now and what will happen in the next stage in Israel. We must watch happenings there carefully, because they affect us directly.

The year 1980 will be an extension of the year 1979 for Israel. The crisis of authority is definitely there. The internal conflict, which has manifested itself in a number of forms, will definitely continue. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the result of continued internal conflict will be a continued increase in Israeli intransigence, which will take the form of intransigence in the matter of settlements, intransigence in the matter of "confiscation," theft of land, and intransigent hostility toward the Arab countries, the Palestinian people's rights and therefore toward the PLO.

This is a fact which we must recognize and communicate to the rest of the world.

In the meetings which Brother Abu Ammar and Brother Farouk Kaddoumi have held in Europe, we have tried our best to warn the West and our friends in other camps that the idea of persuading Israel to withdraw is a wrong approach to the Palestinian issue.

No attempt at persuasion can yield anything, because such is the nature of the Israeli community that it cannot possibly be open to persuasion on this matter. We must therefore use our own power and move with the international community to impose that withdrawal.

We know that Israel is trying to avoid the idea of imposed withdrawal, and it has done so in the Camp David agreements. But we are presenting the world with the right way toward a just peace. A just peace can only be achieved by imposing withdrawal on Israel, not by persuading it to withdraw. We have said this before, and we say it again. It is a fact that has been underscored by Nahum Goldman on several occasions, and by studies undertaken in Israel itself. I recently saw a study on Gush Emunim, for instance. This group may be fanatic in the extreme, but it still has an influence on the decision-making process in Israel, and one can imagine the kind of decisions that can issue from people who are dominated by such hysterical fanaticism. The PLO, fully aware of the nature of the Israeli community, is continuing its struggle on the military level — which is its right — and on all other levels which can support our military action by constant political warfare.

Having presented this general view of the situation, can we say that we have presented it from a position of a Palestinian revolution which is fused with our Arab nation? That would require action to set the Arab house in order, to find a sound formula for Arab cooperation.

To make moves of such international dimensions is not an easy task, but we're taking it on, fully aware of our duty and our chances of success. So my answer to your question, in brief, is that the year 1980 will not be a year of waiting; it will be a year of action of various dimensions in various arenas — action creating new realities.

RECOGNITION

I'll move on from this general view to your specific questions about the PLO and Europe. You cite an interview I gave you five months ago in which I said this year would be the year of European recognition of the PLO. The year I was referring to ends in mid-1980, but it may be worth our while to pause here, five months after I made that statement, to evaluate the development of the European position — especially since the detailed information we have gathered on the European position through our various contacts places us in a position where we can issue judgements.

The fact is that the official invitations Brother Abu Lotf, Farouk Kaddoumi, received to visit Brussels and Rome were indicative. It is true that he had received an invitation to visit Paris earlier, but the fact that Belgium and Italy followed in France's footsteps was very significant.

In the important talks that were held with the Belgian foreign minister, Mr. Simonet, it was clear that the trend in the EEC is toward dealing with the PLO and launching a direct dialogue with it. Those direct dealings with the PLO have been described by Brother Abu Lotf as "*de facto* recognition."

As for official, legal recognition, that is on its way. When will it come? That is what I would like to discuss here:

As a man who is involved in the Euro-Arab dialogue, I will tell you frankly that we in the PLO feel that there has been too much delay in the progress of the European position toward official recognition of the PLO. It is true that some of the contrived obstacles have been eliminated — notably the idea that the PLO must accept Security Council Resolution 242 as a precondition for West European recognition. That attitude has been reconsidered, as we found out in our talks with the Belgian and Italian foreign ministers. But that is not all we are after.

We are after a European position on this matter at the earliest possible time, and we stress that time is of the essence.

We make this cautionary statement from our position as an organization which is interested in promoting Euro-Arab cooperation and the success of the Euro-Arab dialogue, which we still consider a necessity. Western Europe's delay in taking this step and the adoption of unilateral attitudes which are generally unamicable toward the Palestinian issue by some members of the European Community — this can create an unfavorable climate which may reflect badly on the relations between the Arab states as a whole and the European Community.

BRITAIN

Let me go into a couple of specifics here: Although Brother Farouk Kaddoumi held a meeting recently with the British minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr. Ian Gilmour, in the presence of some ministry officials, that meeting took place in the home of the Syrian ambassador and did not go beyond normal social amenities. We believe that Britain's Conservative government has not done what is expected of it. Some of us found excuses for it when it expressed reservations on the communiqué issued by the European Community in the summer of 1979, but the truth is that around six months have passed since that time, and the British position remains unchanged.

In the Jerusalem seminar which we attended in London recently, two Britishers — Peter Mansfield and Christopher Mayhew — went over the British experience in Palestine and Britain's responsibility in the issue from the time it started till the present time. They both arrived at the conclusion that the British position in general, past and present, was "a shame" in every sense of the word — a

shame borne by Britain. Christopher Mayhew noted at the time that Farouk Kaddourni had been officially received in a number of European capitals, but his visit to London was a private one. The Conservative government has maintained the same position on this issue that was held by Labor, whose close relations with Zionism were well-known to us.

This matter was discussed in (last month's) conference of Arab foreign ministers, and we adopted a specific position on it. It was later discussed at the Arab summit, and the summit came out with a position on the Euro-Arab dialogue, expressing the Arabs' desire to continue it but also maintaining a link between economic interests and political attitudes in that dialogue. In a few days, we will be holding another meeting in Tunis to define the Arab position in the dialogue, but the Arabs have already made the broadlines of that position clear. It is now up to the other party to behave responsibly.

The PLO and the Arabs have over the past five years done their best to provide the Euro-Arab dialogue with an amicable political climate, but having given the European Community this period of time, it is our responsibility to say it frankly: The stationary positions of a number of European countries, and the Community's underestimation of the time factor in its progress is bound to affect the political climate of the dialogue, not with the Palestinians alone but also with the rest of the Arabs.

I have made repeated references to the "political climate" because I am among those who are convinced that it is the political climate that makes progress possible. The PLO has exerted considerable efforts toward making the political climate conducive to the development of sound relations. But some European countries are now contributing to the fouling of the climate.

NETHERLANDS, WEST GERMANY

I have mentioned the British position, and I must also mention the position of the Netherlands, which is still the prisoner of the Zionist outlook because of historic factors we all know about. It is true that certain favorable trends have begun to emerge in the Netherlands, but more than that is required.

I must also mention West Germany, which is a big power in Europe. It took a significant step forward after the Vienna meeting, in which former Chancellor Brandt participated, by referring to the Palestinians' right to self-determination. However, its media, its general orientation and the level of its relationship with the PLO all point to an unsatisfactory position.

Then we come to the French position, the positive aspects of which we appreciate. Much has been said about a visit by Brother Abu Ammar to France, which has been decided in principle although no decision has been taken on the timing and the program. What we would like to say about this matter is that when we started considering those visits, we were prompted by our appreciation of the European role and a desire to coordinate Arab-European relations. Our initiatives in that direction must not be misunderstood. Our feet are firmly planted in our revolution, our Arab nation and our position in the Third World, and it is from that position that we are moving.

I believe Western Europe, recognizing its position between the two super powers, will in 1980 have an opportunity to reconsider the negative aspects of its attitude and move toward more responsiveness to the Palestinian cause. We are fully aware of the progress that has been achieved in the European position so far — on the question of the Jewish settlements and in the general outlook toward a comprehensive settlement. But this is not enough; it must be coupled with

an international policy on the Palestinian cause, on the PLO, on Israel and the need to deter it.

VATICAN

And then there is the Vatican.

The Vatican interests us because we are a revolution which is responsible for the holy places, and is proud of their spiritual dimensions, and is part of a nation which has a rich cultural and spiritual heritage — Muslim, Christian and Jewish.

Until last October, it was our view that the Vatican was not giving the Palestinian enough attention; that it was engrossed in dialogue with Israel and finding out what the Israeli point of view was. We asked our friends in Italy and Europe and our brothers in the Arab world to launch an initiative in the direction of the Vatican, and that initiative was launched. One of its results was the mention of the Palestinian issue in the Pope's address to the General Assembly last October. Still, we say we have a great deal to do. The Vatican must gain a real and deep understanding of the effects of this issue on the region, on our brothers the Christians in it, and on all other faiths, so that more efforts can be exerted in the direction of justice.

JAPAN

From Europe, we move on to Japan, whose position, I must say, has so far fallen short of what we expect. Signs have been shown by certain Japanese officials that indicate that Japan intends to recognize the PLO, and so on. But Japan, this economic giant, remains in a state of self paralysis on the political level. It is true that last year and the year before, there were some political visits — not on a very high level — and some action on the cultural level, with certain friendship associations here and there making certain moves and studying the situation. But in the final analysis, we find that Japan is ignoring the time element.

After the last Arab summit in Tunis, there is no running away from the fact that there will be a link between political and economic affairs. We will continue our dialogue with Japan, so that it will recognize this fact, and we will hopefully see a responsive position from the Japanese.

LEBANON

Regarding the Tunis summit: one of the questions you gave me referred to a "crisis of confidence" between the PLO and the Lebanese authorities — a difference of view on where to start in the implementation of the summit resolutions on Lebanon, with the Lebanese authorities giving priority to the South on the grounds that it is the most dangerous area, and the PLO insisting that the resolutions are an indivisible whole and should all be implemented simultaneously.

My answer is this:

The PLO has fully recognized the need to deal with the South Lebanese situation as quickly as possible, and has used various methods to do so.

The PLO's position on this matter is very clear and has been repeatedly explained by the chairman of the organization. The PLO wants the suffering of the South to end. The PLO supports the sovereignty of Lebanon over all its territory, and it supports Lebanese unity in every sense of the word. The PLO wants proper relations with Lebanon; it wants those relations regulated and it has always been careful to have agreements regulating them.

The truth is, there are two approaches to dealing with the South Lebanese problem — the comprehensive approach and the partial approach. The partial approach may affect some of the factors that lead to conflict, but it cannot produce a solution. The only thing that can solve the Southern problem is the comprehensive

approach that links the Southern situation with the situation as a whole.

I assure you that the PLO is being very sincere on this matter, and it has no desire to create issues that lead to conflict. It wants to express its own confidence, but it wants this confidence to draw a responsive reaction. This raises a number of issues, and those issues were discussed at the Tunis summit.

One of them is this: Who is responsible for the suffering of the South and of Lebanon in general? The answer was clearly and unanimously given by the Arab governments at the summit, including Lebanon: Israel is responsible; Israel is after the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and outside them; Israel has chosen the hegemony policy in Lebanon, which is unacceptable.

If we start from this premise, we will arrive at the conclusion that the PLO and Lebanon have several goals in common — some of these being action against dangers posed, and others being action toward positive achievements.

Among the dangers posed, for instance, is the permanent resettlement of the Palestinians in Lebanon. The PLO is totally against this, and so is Lebanon. Let us then meet around this goal and exert joint efforts to avert resettlement. This would help us to lay plans for more action toward the liberation of our land. There are many other ways we can cooperate — in Lebanon, in the Arab world and in the Palestine of the future (for relations can be defined as of now).

What I'm trying to say is that we *can* move from a position of mutual confidence, and each of us can express his confidence through his actions. The bitter experience of the past years has led us to one basic conclusion: that there is no alternative to understanding, confidence and cooperation among all the elements of the Arab world in all parts of it, and specially in Lebanon.

The Arab follow-up committee has begun its work, and it would be premature to talk about it at this point, but we are optimistic about the results of its efforts, specially if it adopts the sound approach — that approach being one which maintains a comprehensive outlook and one which **preassumes a minimum level of mutual confidence**. The PLO insists on these two points.

ARABS

So much for Lebanese-Palestinian relations. When it comes to the relations of the PLO with the Arabs in general, the PLO is at this stage doing its best to maintain the minimum level of Arab solidarity which was achieved at the (1978) Baghdad summit conference.

There are times when differences occur between the PLO and one Arab country, and those differences are generally talked about in great detail by the press — as is the way with the press. But we deal with such problems by stressing two things: our lack of desire to interfere in any Arab country's internal affairs, and our refusal to allow any Arab country to interfere in our internal affairs — except, of course, through brotherly dialogue and exchange of advice at leadership level.

And on the subject of internal affairs, I would like to mention that we in the PLO are proud of our experiment in political democracy. We are watching other experiments carefully, but we are not interested in criticizing or praising them. We are not interested in imposing our approach on others. But when there is an attempt at interference in our internal affairs, we cannot but adopt a definite stand which may contribute to the elimination of the misunderstanding and the achievement of good results. I submit this as a general observation, without going into details, because we are dealing in the realm of theory here.

You ask me about Palestinian-Jordanian relations. These are progressing along the lines that were drawn for them, and it is our hope that they will succeed in dealing with specific problems. Our experiment in bolstering the steadfastness of our people in the occupied territories has been successful to a certain extent, and it is, of course, possible to expand this success to cover other matters.

The PLO believes that it is essential for the Arab countries and the PLO to define their relations with each other. The Arab house must be set in order: we must draw the map of our nation, lest external powers draw it for us. The Arab world has the brains, the understanding, the desire and the will to do it.

IRAN

You ask about Iran:

Much has been said about that, and most of it has been about daily incidents. I prefer to approach the phenomenon as a whole, and present the following thoughts:

The PLO has from the beginning expressed total solidarity with the Iranian Revolution. This was not done emotionally but in total awareness of the course of developments in the region.

The Iranian Revolution must be viewed as a whole. We in the PLO have experienced revolution and know what it means. I refer you to the impressive study done by the American author, Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*. If one dwells on the daily details of a revolution, one drowns in them and loses the general view. We in the PLO maintain our comprehensive view of the Iranian Revolution. We regard it as a great historic event, signaling the failure of the attempts to inundate the Third World. I'm referring to the attempts to bring in deformed versions of Western civilization and allowing them to dominate our societies. This has proved impossible. We in the PLO, while condemning the inundation

approach, are also against insulation, whatever form it takes. We insist on a balance between heritage and modernity, which we consider the real answer to any invading civilization. On this subject, you may refer to the studies that have been written down the years, from Ibn Khaldoun to Toynbee, including the excellent study prepared by Constantine Zurayk.

Our position, then, is one of solidarity with the Iranian Revolution. Through this solidarity, there are consultations and exchanges of view on all developments. More than one serious incident has occurred recently. Their effects have been considerable, and they are still unfolding. It would be a big mistake to make snap judgments at this time, because Iran is influenced by a series of internal and external factors.

The other thing I would like to stress is that our solidarity with the Iranian Revolution is undertaken from our position as a part of the Arab world which belongs to the Arab Islamic civilization — the civilization whose spiritual dimensions include the principle of brotherhood among the faiths and rejection of religious or sectarian strife. Our belonging to the Arab world implies a certain position toward our brothers in the Arabian Gulf and on the borders with Iran — a position of total allegiance to our brothers in those areas. Our role, therefore, is to avert any upsets between Iran and the Arab region.

This leads me to a conviction we have always held — the conviction that our Arab nation must always pay attention to its strategic depth, and its strategic depth is the strip that contains Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and so on — up to Ethiopia and Black Africa. In the 1950's and 1960's, imperialism and Israel succeeded in making the Arabs' strategic depth hostile to them. It is now our task to fuse it to us — and we can do it.



CSO: 4820

FLN CENTRAL COMMITTEE ENDS SESSION, ISSUES RESOLUTION

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[Text] The FLN Central Committee's second session ended a short while ago after 5 days of debate and frank, constructive discussion of all points on the agenda. After endorsing the resolutions which were discussed in the course of the session, President Chadli Bendjedid, the FLN secretary general, made a guiding speech.

He expressed his complete satisfaction with the strugglers' frankness and the spirit of responsibility and democracy that marked the meetings of the session. After referring to the resolutions adopted--which are characterized with objectivity and realism--the president saluted all workers who have thankfully exerted efforts to build the country, especially in the economic field. He referred to the role of supervision [raqabah] in protecting the country, and especially in protecting its structure the worker himself. He also confirmed the necessity of paying attention to duty and not confining oneself to demanding rights.

President Chadli Bendjedid added: "The issue for today is to control available potentials more effectively and to pay more attention to management in order to be able to build the social society for which we aspire. The president of the republic expressed his grave dismay at the method adopted by some workers and youth to express their demands. In that respect he said: Problems do exist. We are not ashamed to confess their existence. We believe that what should be a cause for shame is if we do not try to solve those problems objectively and by means of dialog and consultation.

After confirming that the socialist choice is one that we cannot go back on, the president of the republic expressed his conviction that the political leadership is fully aware of its responsibilities and that it will see to it that all measures adopted will be implemented in the interest of the revolution, the country and the citizens.

President Chadli Bendjedid thanked the strugglers for their confidence in him and declared the conclusion of the meetings of the FLN Central Committee's second session.

In the general political resolution issued at the end of its session, the FLN Central Committee saluted the important speech delivered by the brother president of the republic and the secretary of the party before the National People's Assembly on the state of the nation; the valuable instructions included therein concerning comprehensive, harmonious development in order to strengthen the march of our socialist revolution toward achieving all its objectives; and the foreign policy which emanates from the main choices of the revolution.

It expressed its satisfaction with all the measures the president of the republic and secretary general of the party announced to answer the persistent demands of the working masses and to meet their chief needs, such as the transitional measures concerning raises in wages pending the implementation of the general basic law on the worker. All these measures and steps are paving the way for a more comprehensive and more profound effort for which all capabilities should be mustered in order to transcend all the negative points and shortcomings which mark the current phase of development. This phase requires all strugglers and officials at all levels to be more profoundly aware of the exigencies of the phase and to join in and be happy in working for victory in the battle of production and management.

The FLN Central Committee feels that organizing the combat against social malaise and the negative points which appeared along side the march of the revolution is an urgent political necessity. In that respect it salutes the efforts exerted by the party bodies and the state machinery in making the masses aware and mustering them into this battle.

The FLN Central Committee believes that the positive results of that process, in its first phase, calls for the necessity of deepening, expanding and continuing it so that it may embrace all sectors and levels.

The general political resolution says: The Central Committee feels that the efforts exerted hitherto in assessing development projects and previous plans are still insufficient. It calls for continuing and deepening such efforts in order to reach a precise, objective assessment of the positive and negative points of the experiment as this is the sound springboard for drawing up future plans and securing their success.

On the other hand, the FLN Central Committee, in its general political resolution, which was endorsed in its final meeting, confirms the necessity of making available all essential conditions to safeguard the security of the nation and defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of imperialist maneuvers in the region.

The Central Committee renews Algeria's adherence to the principles and objectives of the nonaligned movement and the OAU. It salutes the resolutions adopted by the OAU concerning the Western Sahara issue and the resolutions of the subcommittee of the Monrovia summit conference which aim at enabling

the Saharan people to exercise their right of self-determination freely. The Central Committee salutes the political and military victories of the Saharan people under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front. It confirms the solidarity of the Algerian people and their party with the Saharan people in their struggle in the cause of full independence and self-determination.

The Central Committee declares Algeria's commitment continuing the efforts which aim at establishing international economic order and encourage the setting up of international mechanisms that all take the legitimate interests of all peoples into consideration.

The FLN Central Committee announces its satisfaction with the positive reception accorded the Algerian initiative in Caracas--the initiative that aims at the formation of a development bank for the benefit of the Third World peoples.

CSO: 4402

FLN ISSUES RESOLUTION ON GENERAL POLICY

LD311328 Algiers APS in English 1204 GMT 31 Dec 79 LD

[Text] Algiers, 31/12/79 (APS)--The F.L.N. Central Committee which ended its works Sunday adopted a resolution on general policy. The resolution stresses the necessity to ensure security and to defend the sovereignty of the country. It reasserts Algeria's attachment to non-alignment principals and hails O.A.U. resolutions on Western Sahara. Excerpts:

"The Central Committee says its satisfaction with the measures announced by President Chadli in order to meet the demands of the workers" (President Chadli recently announced, an increase of salaries pending the implementation of the worker's general statute).

"The Central Committee considers that the efforts made so far in the evaluation of development projects are insufficient. It calls for their pursuit in order to reach an objective and precise evaluation of positive and negative aspects of this experience". This is necessary for planification.

"The Central Committee says that the general orientations on planification for the next decade exposed in the report presented by the Minister of Planification are a necessary basis for the elaboration of the next five year plan which will soon be submitted to the Politburo's extraordinary congress".

"The Central Committee reasserts the importance of the role of national cadres in the preparation of development projects. (...) It also stresses the necessity to take into account the requirements of the Algerian reality and its general data".

"The Central Committee says that the decisions it has taken in fields of housing, hydraulics, education and vocational training, stand within the response to the citizen's daily needs..."

"The Central Committee stresses the necessity to guarantee the security of the motherland and the defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity..."

"The Central Committee asserts the Algerian people's and his [as received] party's resolve to continue the struggle against colonialism. Neocolonialism, imperialism. Racism and Zionism and to reinforce their solidarity, with Arab, African and all peoples struggling against foreign domination".

"The Central Committee asserts Algeria's attachment to non-alignment principles and objectives. It says that the movement has once more proved its force and the rightness of its policy during the recent Havana conference despite imperialist manoeuvres...

"The Central Committee asserts its attachment to the principles and objectives of the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) and to the resolutions of the recent Monrovia summit which allowed the African countries to reinforce their solidarity against colonialism, imperialism and racial segregation..."

"The Central Committee backs O.A.U. decisions on Western Sahara which acknowledged the Saharan people's right to self determination. This right was reiterated by non-aligned countries and the UN in its last session. The Central Committee hails the victories of the Saharan people under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front"

"The Central Committee reaffirms the Algerian people's solidarity with the Saharan people in their struggle for self determination and independence".

"The Central Committee hails the brave and positive attitude of the recent Mauritanian policy toward Western Sahara issue embodied August 5, 1979 in a deal with the POLISARIO Front..."

"The Central Committee hails the victory of Zimbabwe and reasserts Algeria's unconditional support to the peoples of Namibia and South Africa.

"The Central Committee pays a homage to the heroic Palestinian people in their struggle against Zionist occupants and says its absolute support to the Palestinian revolution under the leadership of the P.L.O."

"The Central Committee urges Arab countries to unite and reinforce their ranks against Zionist and imperialist manoeuvres".

"The Central Committee hails the Iranian revolution and denounces all manoeuvres and threats aimed at impeding this revolution".

"The Central Committee recalls that Algeria is keen on the establishment of a new economic order and the promoting of international cooperation. It hails the O.P.E.C. decision to contribute to Third World countries' efforts for development".

"The Central Committee says Algeria's wish to establish friendly and co-operation ties with all peoples over the world and first of all Third World and socialist countries' peoples, on the principles of mutual respect and non-interference in domestic affairs".

"The Central Committee asserts Algeria's will to reach an agreement with France on all questions of bilateral relations based on mutual respect and balance of interests.

FRG CORRESPONDENT: IRAN DESPERATELY SEEKS NEW GRAIN SOURCE

DW081045 Duesseldorf HANDELSBLATT in German 7 Jan 80 p 8 DW

[Correspondent dispatch signed HKL: "Feverish Search for New Grain Suppliers"]

[Text] Tehran, 5/6 January 1980--Nearly every day new aspects arise for the assessment of the political situation of Iran after the revolution. In contrast, the consequences of the seizure of power by Khomeyni for the economy of the country become more and more clearly evident. The people have to cope with an inflation rate of 150 percent and an inadequate consumer supply.

Most foreign factories are idle or are not operating at full capacity. This is attributable mainly to two reasons: The import of accessories is encountering enormous difficulties, and the work morale leaves much to be desired. In addition, there is the insecurity about the ownership conditions after the announced nationalizations, and the compulsory continuation of wage payments, not to mention the fact that the enterprise managements are entirely at a loss.

The bazaar merchants are deriving their benefits from this state of affairs. Ever since business with imported goods ceased and the many assembly factories practically had to quit operating--the distribution of the imported and also home-assembled commodities largely bypassed them--their business has seen a new boom. The people are blaming the businessmen for the inflation rate of 150 percent whereas the latter, for their part, try to refute this charge.

"Without us the shah regime would not have been overthrown. We are not exploiters of the people," they declare, and say that the Ministry of Economics alone is responsible for the complete disorganization of goods distribution. Granted, the official authorities in question admit the economic difficulties, yet they claim to be incapable of remedying the serious supply shortcoming or of providing exact data as to the level of inflation. The lack of statistical data is used for justification. And it is solely the shah regime, in turn, which is responsible for this lack of data.

Over and over the authorities have announced that they intend to stop speculation. The revolutionary guard can arrest merchants any time who hoard goods or doctor labels. They have not been successful, and malicious tongues contend that the revolutionary guard is making common cause with the merchants. Still, the people are not going hungry. The U.S. economic blockade which has in practice been imposed has not brought life to a standstill, only new habits have emerged.

The American cigarettes condemned by television and officially banned from trade are obtainable without difficulty at any street corner. However, a package now costs 120 rial (about DM3) instead of 50 rial (just about DM1.25) a few weeks back. There are no lines in front of stores. But the basic foodstuffs of the Iranian people--bread, rice, milk and ground meat--have gone up as much as 150 percent. Eggs which cost 70 rial a kilogram under the old regime at times reached a price of 170 rial.

New supplier countries for grain and other basic foodstuffs are being sought feverishly. Negotiations are being conducted with Western Europe, Canada, Brazil, Australia and Thailand. Reportedly the Canadian wheat board has replied that suppliable quantities are not available, and Australia reportedly has been warned by the United States against substituting as a wheat supplier. Still, as late as in October an agreement on the delivery of 0.5 million tons of wheat was concluded between Iran and Australia. In Thailand, too, Iranian negotiators are seeking to contract deliveries of 0.5 million tons of rice.

About one fourth of the Iranian food requirements must be imported. Each month Iran needs as much as 100,000 tons of wheat, 100,000 tons of fodder grain, 50,000 tons of rice, and between 25,000 and 30,000 tons of edible oil, quite apart from considerable quantities of meat and eggs. It is necessary to spend about \$2 billion a year for these food imports. It is now planned to increase agricultural yields under all circumstances, though tangible improvements cannot be expected in a short time. In the meantime, all businessmen have been instructed to pay for imports only in the currency of the supplier country.

Gasoline is cheap. But the owners of automobiles are worried about spare parts. It takes a few weeks to find a battery at three times the catalog rate. Foreign cars are no longer imported. Whoever wants and can afford to buy a car must buy an Iranian car. He has a choice between a used "Peykan" of undetermined age which costs 80,000 rial, and a new model for which at least eight times that price is asked.

Rents are reduced by order of the revolutionary council. This does not prevent rent hikes, however. A small, rather comfortable apartment in downtown Tehran costs 30,000 rial today, roughly 5,000 rial more than before the revolution. Conversely, the villas with parks and swimming pools in the north of the city are being leased nowadays at one tenth the former rate. Some owners even would like to let foreigners have them free of charge just to be relieved of the danger of occupation by some people of the new regime.

BRIEFS

BEDOUIN LAND REQUISITIONING--The Beersheba District Court today declared that the requisitioning of Bedouin land in the region of Lagiyah in the Negev was lawful and that the state can take possession. Our correspondent Moshe Negbi says that in the past the high court of justice forbade the state from seizing the land that was requisitioned until the district court looked into the Bedouin claims that the requisitioning was unlawful. When the state violated this ruling and tried to enter the area, the president of the supreme court severely reprimanded the state and the legal adviser began legal proceedings against several civil servants. The district judge in Beersheba has now ruled that the Bedouin claims are groundless and the requisitioning was totally valid. He even awarded the state costs, for which the Bedouin will have to pay a sum of 17,000 pounds. Our correspondent points out that the land in Lagiyah was requisitioned 5 years ago in order to establish a township where the Bedouin were to have been concentrated. [Text] [TA311050 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 31 Dec 79 TA]

DISTRIBUTION OF NEW HOUSING--A classified document on the decisions of the ministerial settlement committee reveals that 73 percent of the 6,170 housing units that will be built beyond the green line in 1980 will be erected in Judaea and Samaria. The document also indicates that only 12 percent of all housing units are designated for the Golan, of which about a third will be built in rural settlements and the rest in the town of Qazrin. It also says that 11 percent will be built in the Jordan valley, of which about a third will be in the Ma'ale Efrayim urban center. Only 4 percent will be erected in the Gaza Strip, primarily in the urban center that is going to be established in the Qatif quarter. The following distribution has been decided upon regarding the 4,500 housing units allocated to Judaea and Samaria: Nearly 50 percent for rural settlements and the rest for urban settlements. Some of the housing units will be allocated to new settlements planned in Samaria: Dotan C, Qarney Shomron C, Qarney Shomron D, Mizpe Giv'on and Efrat. It was decided in the cabinet meeting yesterday that the finance, housing and agriculture ministers will prepare a budget proposal that will be submitted for the approval of the economic mini-cabinet. [Dalya Mazori] [Text] [TA311121 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 31 Dec 79 p 6 TA]

BIDS SOUGHT FOR NEW DAM IN JORDAN

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 17 Dec 79 p 6

[Text] The Jordan Valley Authority has asked companies to submit their qualifications for building the Maqarin Dam, part of a \$1 billion development project, and said it will accept tenders from August 31 next year. It expects to award the contract by January 1981 and hopes that work will be complete within five years of that date.

The dam, on the Yarmouk River, east of Lake Tiberius, is designed to store about 350 million cubic metres of water for drinking and irrigation. The first stage of the project, completed last summer at a cost of \$200 million, has provided enough water to irrigate more than 20,000 hectares. The project is being financed by international agencies including the World Bank, OPEC, the EEC, and various Arab, European and Development Funds.

In advertisements published last week, the Valley Authority said the dam would be constructed under the terms of a general unit-price type contract including escalating cost provisions.

The dam will be 150 metres high; it will require a grout curtain needing some 80 kilometres of drilling, a concrete diaphragm of about 20,000 square metres and a total length of five kms of grouting and drainage adits. It will also entail two concrete-lined spillways, power and irrigation tunnels, a 22-MW hydraulic power house and 21-km transmission line carrying 132 KW.

World Bank officials are currently in Amman to discuss finance of the dam. A Jordanian source said the government has made a series of contacts with international organisations for extra financing, but denied reports by Israeli TV that indirect contacts were carried out with Israel to divide the Yarmouk waters. The dam lies on the Jordanian-Syrian border, close to the Mukhiba dam, where work stopped with the breakout of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

CSO: 4820

JORDANIAN PURCHASE OF HARDWARE PREVIOUSLY ORDERED BY THE SHAH

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 10 Dec 79 p 3

[Text] Jordan has signed a contract worth L200 million (\$30 million) with the British Department of Defence for 275 Super-Chieftain tanks, it was announced in London last week. The order is considerably larger than had been expected; previous reports had suggested that Jordan might buy 200 of the tanks, originally ordered by Iran but cancelled after the Shah's overthrow in February.

The size of the order suggests that Jordan will not go ahead with the purchase of tanks from the US, a contract which would have had conditions attached. As this newsletter reported in its August 20 and October 22 issues, the US offered Jordan up to 300 M-60 tanks on the condition that it destroyed as many obsolete vehicles as new ones bought, so as not to alter the existing levels of tanks held by Israel and its neighbours. There was Israeli opposition to the proposed sale.

The Americans recently said they expected Jordan to buy 200 British and 100 American tanks.

The British tanks, baptised Shir-1 for the Iranian armed forces (shir means "lion" in Persian), are being modified to meet Jordanian specifications, a British spokesman said. The tanks were manufactured under an agreement committing Iran to the cost of research and development; a second version, the Shir-2, was to have been equipped with the famed Chobman armour plating, which the British have developed for NATO forces, but it is now thought unlikely that any tanks with this armour will be exported to non-NATO countries.

The British spokesman said the sale of the tanks to Jordan would make some inroads into the estimated \$1 billion in lost sales to Iran, but the exact scale of the losses had yet to be worked out.

CSO: 4820

FATHI YAKAN IN GOOD CONDITION AFTER RELEASE BY SYRIA

Beirut L'ORIENT-LE JOUR in French 13 Nov 79 p 12

[For related material see JPRS 74877, 7 January 1980, No 2064 of this series, pp 68-72]

[Text] Many delegations went to Tripoli yesterday to the residence of Fathi Yakan, secretary general of the "Moslem Confraternity," who was returned to his family Sunday after being held in Syria since 27 October for the purpose of interrogating him. The delegations congratulated Yakan on the occasion of his return and asked about his physical condition. He asserted that he had been "very well treated" during his detention in Damascus.

In a communique published after its secretary general's return, the "Moslem Confraternity" expressed its thanks to all those who contributed their efforts to find where Yakan was and to ensure his return, beginning with the chief of state, Elias Sarkis, Prime Minister Selim Hoss, the Mufti of the Republic, the FFA's commander in chief, the Palestinian Resistance's Command and the leaders of the parties that intervened in his behalf. Yakan himself stated that he was extremely "touched" by this unanimity.

Contrary to the intention attributed to him, Yakan did not hold a press conference yesterday. On the other hand, he provided some details on the circumstances of his detention in Syria to some journalists who visited him and among whom was our correspondent in North Lebanon, Negib Iskandar.

"My detention in Damascus," Yakan asserted, "enabled me to set forth to the Syrian authorities the truth as to the activities of the "Moslem Confraternity" in Lebanon about which the Syrian leaders had an erroneous idea.

"The first part of my detention lasted 4 days during which I was shut up in the Damascus military prison and interrogated. I was then admitted to the military hospital to receive care for the after effects of the hemorrhage I suffered on the day I was abducted."

Yakan related that he was abducted on his way to his office in Tripoli. In front of the door of the elevator of the building, armed individuals approached him and ordered him to follow them. He put up strong resistance against them because he was still unaware of their intentions. His abductors therefore had to use strong arm methods and struck him, made him bleed, according to Yakan; the Syrian authorities subsequently blamed those in charge of his abduction for the way they went about overcoming him and offered him their apologies.

Forced Residence

"When I left the hospital," Yakan went on, "my detention was changed to forced residence in the domicile of some high-ranking officers of the Syrian Army. My interrogation itself turned into a political dialogue during which I exchanged with my interlocutors our points of view relating to the regional situation, the struggle against the Zionist enemy and the Arab cause. The Syrian authorities were able to realize then that the reports they have on the activities of the "Moslem Confraternity" are false and that the "Confraternity," along with the other Arab forces, is in the same trench facing the common enemy."

In another connection, in an interview with the correspondent of the "Akhbar al-Yoms" press agency, Yakan affirmed that "the principal charge made against the "Moslem Confraternity" by the Syrian authorities was its responsibility for various incidents which are going on in Syria. "The clarifications which I contributed on the subject of the activities of the 'Confraternity,'" he went on, "made it possible to bring out into the open the informers and their motives."

On the other hand, Yakan affirmed that during one of the meetings organized with the Syrian leaders who questioned him, he had glimpsed the Imam of Kab Elias, Abdel Rahman Mahzoub, who was himself abducted a few days before Yakan was. He made it clear that "the Imam's health seemed normal and he did not seem to have suffered any maltreatment."

According to the agency, Yakan himself heard Sheik Abdel Rahman Mahzoub affirm that he was well in response to a question directed at him. However, no words were exchanged by the Imam and the secretary of the "Moslem Confraternity," according to the latter. Finally, Yakan affirmed that the Syrian leaders had asked him to choose the itinerary of his return trip himself and that he had preferred to return to Lebanon by the Homs road and the Syrian-North Lebanese border.

At Homs he was received by the military officer in charge of the city who gave a lunch in his honor in the presence of several Syrian officers. He was then taken to the Lebanese border by Dabbousie where he was awaited by leaders of the Palestinian organization "Fateh" and by the Syrian military head for the North Lebanese area who escorted him to his residence.

The Affair of the Hostages of North Lebanon

In another connection, no progress was recorded yesterday during the mediation undertaken by various parties to secure the liberation of all of the hostages of North Lebanon still in the hands of their abductors.

The key mediators at the present time on this matter are the Minister of Economy, Boutros Harb, and the Apostolic Nuncio, Monsignor Carlo Furno. Harb was received at 0900 hours yesterday by the chief of state to whom he reported the efforts made up to now to ensure the success of the mediation. For his part,

Mgr Furno paid a visit to the prime minister, Selim Hoss, to whom he related the efforts made jointly with Harb in this affair.

At the practical level, the matter appears rather to reveal some hardening. The militia of North Lebanon, in conformity with the directives issued along these lines by the former chief of state, Sleiman Frangie, received an order to put strictly into effect the economic blockade, which was decided upon by him against the regions under the "Lebanese Front's" influence, a blockade consisting in particular of preventing these areas from getting fuel supplies coming from the Tripoli refinery. As a measure of retaliation, the "Kataeb" stationed at Barbara on the national road between Beirut and Tripoli a few kilometers north of Jbeil, are systematically turning back the trucks laden with merchandise heading for Tripoli, in particular the vehicles transporting flour coming from the Beirut flour mills and intended for the bakeries of the northern "mohafazat."

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CSO: 4800

EXPANSION OF BEIRUT AIRPORT

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 10 Dec 79 p 3

[Text] Beirut airport authority has shortlisted 17 international companies for the expansion of its airport terminal--a project costing between LL 225 and LL 250 million (\$65-\$73 million) and intends to award a contract about March 10 next year, authoritative sources told this newsletter. Most of the companies are European and 5 of them are French; local contractors will handle some of the work, which is scheduled to last four years.

The project is designed to expand the existing terminal to five times its size, enabling it to handle 6 million passengers a year by the turn of the century. Capacity at present is about 3 million passengers, although actual traffic is well below half of that; the sources said it was very doubtful that capacity handling would ever be reached; especially since the number of transit passengers is expected to drop in the coming decade with the growth of non-stop, long-distance services, they added that the plans for the expansion of Beirut airport had been drawn up before the 1975-76 Lebanese civil war and the authority was stuck with them.

Paris airport authority has already drawn up a design for a new runway at Beirut and the local authority expects to award a contract for this LL 100 million (\$29 million) project sometime next year. Another LL 100 million contract will be awarded for resurfacing aprons and adjoining areas.

The new runway will be 3,700 metres in length, compared with 3,200 metres for the existing main runway, and will be designed to handle the new fleet of jetliners to be purchased by Lebanon's flag-carrier, Middle East Airlines. The new runway will run at right-angles to the sea, whereas the existing runway lies parallel to the coast; the sources said this would facilitate movements by larger aircraft and also make it possible for approaches to be made over the eastern part of the city as well as the west. Several installations will have to be relocated, among them the local radio transmission station and this is posing problems.

The airport authority's programme is expected to go side by side with MEA's development on the site. This includes construction of a five-storey operations and administrative building with a total floor area of 65,000 square metres.

Beirut airport last year handled 1.3 million passengers, barely half the peak in 1973-74. At that time, Beirut was the biggest airport in the Middle East as far as passenger handling was concerned, outstripping even Cairo, but today it ranks third, behind Kuwait and Cairo, just ahead of Dubai.

CSO: 4820

INTERVIEW WITH SYRIAN MINISTER OF PETROLEUM

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 17 Dec 79 p 6

[Text] Syria, one of the minor Arab oil producers, was unusual in that until a few years ago it tried to develop its industry without relying on foreign help. That policy was quietly changed in 1973. In an exclusive interview with AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO's Randa Takieddine, Petroleum Minister Issa Darwish outlines recent developments in the oil industry. Mr Darwish was interviewed in Kuwait during the recent conference of OAPEC ministers.

Q: Can you first describe Syria's oil exploration policies?

A: Oil exploration in Syria is carried out in two ways. The first is through government agencies; this is carried out by the Syrian Petroleum Authority using its own equipment, operated by Syrian nationals. We have been able to produce all of Syria's oil output estimated at around 10 million tonnes a year. However, 5 years ago we sought the assistance of foreign companies in prospecting and exploration. We signed five contracts, with Rompetrol of Romania, Samaco, (owned jointly by Coastal States of the US and Deminex of Germany), Shell Pecten, Challenger of Canada and Marathon of the US.

Under oil prospecting laws in Syria, the foreign companies must bring in their own rigs. Rompetrol has already drilled five wells in one of its finds in northeastern Syria. Shell drilled two wells: one, in the Rassafi region, struck oil, while the other, southeast of Aleppo, is being assessed. Preliminary results show oil-bearing formations. Samaco drilled a well northwest of Deir Ez-Zor and oil shale was found and the second well will be drilled soon.

Foreign assistance is extended under service contracts for exploration and drilling. These are similar to some extent to participation agreements in oil production. The exploration is carried out by the foreign company on a sole risk basis. If oil is struck, foreign participation is transformed into a stake for the foreign company in a joint-venture with the Syrian government. If the foreign company is to be reimbursed for exploration expenses, the national stake in the venture could go up to 75 and even 80

percent. Even while reimbursement is in process the national stake should not fall below 50 percent of the value of the oil produced.

The government does not finance oil exploration and development operations, the cost of which is borne by the companies. The operations that could be carried by the company include field development and the construction of pipelines to carry the crude to terminals. In the case of already existing Syrian pipelines, the company will pay a certain fee.

Q: You have called for foreign investments in the oil sector; would such investors in this sector be Arab and have you found any oil exporters interested and prepared to take up such investments?

A: There are no foreign investors in the oil sector in Syria except those I mentioned. We do not have any other investments in oil except by the the Arab Petroleum Investment Corporation (APICORP). However, whenever we have any party interested in investment in our oil sector we shall consider its application, in accordance with national interest.

Q: Your relations with Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini are good. Do you have any relations with Iran within the oil sector and do you have any plans for that?

A: So far we have not developed any petroleum relations with Iran since most of our crude oil requirements are imported from the Arab countries; oil products are also imported from the international market. When we need additional quantities of oil derivatives or of crude and find that buying oil from Iran is economical we shall do that as friendly countries with due regard to our mutual interests.

Q: And what about Iraq; how far do your relations with Baghdad affect the economy?

A: Our relations with Iraq are normal and moving along the lines of contracts concluded. There are no problems and Iraqi oil is still flowing in pipelines across Syria and we are still receiving Iraqi crude. We believe that this cooperation will increase in the future since it serves both countries.

Q: What projects have you undertaken in the oil sector?

A: Romania has completed the Banias refinery which will have a capacity of 6 million tonnes. It is now in experimental operation and we hope it will be ready for commercial operation within the next few months.

Three weeks ago we signed a contract with Interpose of France which will set up an associated gas liquefaction plant near the oil fields at a cost of \$60 million. The project is due for completion within 28 months. Other projects include the expansion of the Homs refinery and the renewal of some

of its installations. The refinery has a throughput of 5 million tonnes. The estimated cost of expansion--which is more development of the refinery since the renewal of installations would raise capacity by close to 300,000 to 400,000 tonnes--is \$50 million. No contractor has yet been named but one is expected to be chosen in the first half of next year.

Q: What is the energy situation in Syria?

A: Syria still produces less oil than it consumes. But the problem is that of providing fuel at very low prices. We are incurring heavy losses through subsidisation, specially with domestic fuel consumption increasing at an annual rate of 10 percent. We may call for an energy conference this month to discuss energy prospects in Syria and ways and means of increasing thriftiness in fuel consumption as well as the development of alternative energy sources, including hydraulic, solar and nuclear energy. Such a conference would be the cornerstone to draft a future energy strategy.

Syria's Oil Earnings Improve

Syria's surplus revenue from oil exports last year amounted to SL 1,284.6 million (\$327 million) compared to SL 678.5 million (\$172.8 million) in the previous year. The surplus was, however, well below the 1975 figure of SL 1,979.7 million (\$504.2 million). The surplus achieved last year is mainly attributed to reduced imports of oil products. These dropped from 4.4 million tonnes in 1977 to 3 million tonnes last year.

CSO: 4820

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DESCRIBED

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 10 Dec 79 pp 11-16

[Text]

In the period from 1970 to 1977 Syria's GNP rose from SL 3,981 million to SL 26,132 million, a 556 per cent increase.* In agriculture the value of output rose from SL 1,380 million in 1970 to SL 5,120 million in 1977. A further 345 per cent increase was registered in the industry and mining sector, from SL 1,264 million in 1970 to SL 5,626 million in 1977. Record expansion was achieved in the housing and construction sector with a contribution to national product increasing from SL 225 million in 1970 to SL 1,799 million in 1977, a 700 per cent increase. The contribution of the transport and communications sector rose from SL 639 million to SL 1,172 million over the same period, an 83 per cent increase, while the commercial sector's contribution increased from SL 1,173 million in 1970 to SL 6,619 million in 1977. The finance, insurance and banking sector's contribution rose dramatically from SL 120 million in 1970 to SL 685 million last year.

Though hardly exhaustive or recent, the above figures are nevertheless indicative of growth trends in Syria over the past decade. Overall growth raised Syria's national income to SL 23,431 million in 1977, a SL 17,774 million increase over the country's income of SL 5,657 million in 1970, a 312 per cent increase. The share of agriculture out of national income increased from SL 1,309 million in 1970 to SL 4,899 million in 1977, a 275 per cent rise. The industrial sector's share rose from SL 1,068 million to SL 4,948 million over the same period, or by 355 per cent. Income per capita rose 36 per cent from SL 1,030 in 1970 to SL 3,331 in 1977.

*The value of the Syrian pound, a non-convertible currency, has varied by less than 1 percent over the past decade; at today's rate it is worth \$0.2547. For the purpose of this survey, an exchange rate of \$0.25 may be assumed throughout.

Net capital formation in the period 1970 to 1977 rose markedly, with obvious concentration in industry where investments rose from SL 187 million to SL 5,061 million. Net capital formation in agriculture increased to SL 660 million in 1977 compared with SL 248 million in 1970.

Syrian industrial policy reflects the influence of the general problems facing the economy. The Fourth Five Year Development Plan scheduled for the period 1976-80, but announced only in 1977, includes investments worth \$13.8 billion. Delays in the plan are plentiful; their main causes being that 40 per cent of the Third Five Year Plan was carried over to the fourth plan period, and the hesitation among Arab aid donors. These were reportedly unhappy with the way much of the money for contracts was finding its way into the hands of middlemen rather than projects and the manner by which projects were carelessly drawn so that most of them were wasted investments.

The plan was eventually and officially promulgated in April 1977, with the first two years regarded as a transitional plan period. The main targets of the plan, published in this newsletter's issue of May 29, 1978, are the attainment of a 12 percent average real annual rate of growth, a level only two-thirds reached so far. The major areas of growth were to be transport and communications (16 percent), industry (15 percent) and agriculture (8 percent). The plan reflected a change of emphasis, since in earlier plans industry had gradually taken over from trade, agriculture and the Euphrates dam as the main contributor to GDP.

In a recent statement to the official daily Tishrin, Minister of Transport Selim Yassin assessed progress achieved under the supervision and promotion of his ministry, which was created only in 1974. Mr Yassin said the Ministry of Transport had moved along two lines since its creation. The first was to ensure the proper functioning of the existing transportation network and the other was to complete projects listed under the third and fourth five year development plans that were to lead to the expansion and upgrading of the network.

Mr Yassin said the Ministry and subordinate agencies had been particularly concerned over the expansion of the public transport network. One thousand buses were procured for the various governorates. This was accompanied by full capacity utilisation of existing public transport means. In Damascus, Mr Yassin said, public transport vehicles are now operating on most transport lines and the rest will be covered in mid-1980. Without giving accurate figures, the minister said between 1975 and 1978 the

expansion in the number of transport vehicles was as follows: public passenger cars increased 40 per cent and private passenger cars 58 per cent, public buses rose 53 per cent and private buses increased 14 per cent, public transport trucks 44 per cent while private trucks increased 105 per cent, tanker trucks rose 159 per cent, public lorries increased by 415 per cent and private lorries by 444 per cent. Mr Yassin added that the Ministry plans to allow private sector companies to import trucks and other transport vehicles so as to raise the capacity of the state's transport network. A further 1,200 buses were put in operation between major Syrian cities and rural areas to meet the increasing need for cheap public transport facilities.

In railway transport the emphasis was on the completion of existing railway network expansion projects. Noted among these projects are the Latakia-Qamishli railway running 750 kilometres at a cost of SL 734 million, the Akkari-Homs-Damascus railway running 273 kilometres at a cost of SL 363 million and the Homs-Muheen mines railway running 650 kilometres at a cost of LS 173 million. Progress on the latter project is well advanced and it could be complete in early 1980. Meanwhile the Aleppo-Hama-Homs railway is being upgraded. The railway runs 230 kilometres and the works will cost SL 211 million. A third project, the Tartous-Akkari railway (42 kilometres) is being used to carry imports from Tartous to various destinations through other railway lines.

Among seaports, work is underway on the expansion of the Tartous and Latakia terminals, the latter with Soviet assistance. The first phase of the Tartous port project was completed in mid-1978 when the breakwater was extended 710 metres and the third phase which will bring the breakwater to 1010 metres was launched. When the second phase of the Tartous port project is completed, tenders will be invited for the construction of the wharfs. Total allocations for the Tartous port development under the fourth Five Year Development Plan amounted to SL 327 million.

Three vessels created the nucleus of the Syrian commercial fleet. Four other ships are on order and ship repair yards are contemplated. The Syrian-Jordanian Maritime Transport Company was set up with a capital of SL 100 million which placed orders for two 6,300 tonne vessels at a cost of \$10 million. The first of these vessels, Barada, was delivered and put in service.

Complementary works at the Damascus International Airport are in progress, according to Mr Yassin, while the second phase of the Latakia airport expansion plan is also underway. At Damascus, the State Establishment for Industrial Construction was

contracted to complete the reception lounge at the airport at a cost of SL 100 million while another national company, ROICO, was contracted to complete runway expansion works to a length of 1,200 metres. Installations at other Syrian airports are being upgraded. Special importance is given to the Latakia, Hama and Hasaka airports.

Syrian Arab Airlines, the national carrier, has spent SL 145 million on aircraft purchase Mr Yassin said, while more than SL 4 million have been spent so far and under the Fourth Five Year Development Plan for aircraft sparepart and maintenance works.

Special Orchard Centres Established

Under the current Plan, orchards were targeted to cover an area of 20,000 hectares of irrigated land and 90,000 hectares of arable land. Special breeding centres were set up which produced 12 million orchards over the four year period 1975-78. Another 6.5 million would be produced by the end of this year and an equal number next year, thus meeting the plan target. The Ministry of Agriculture's role has not been limited to breeding plants and orchards, but has included land reform. The Ministry secured the equipment for land improvement to its various agencies which completed terracing of 4,300 hectares only last year. Pilot orchard farming on low yield areas covered 1,000 hectares. The state orchard cultivation targets were raised by President Assad to 42.8 million orchards by 1983. State assistance to farmers is carried out by the Agricultural Cooperative Bank. The bank, having 54 branches, was established at the end of the 19th century and extends medium-and long-term financing in all forms of agricultural projects and cooperatives, provides other services including the discount and acceptance of bills, advances on current accounts and issues guarantees. The interest rates charged by the Agricultural Cooperative Bank since 1970 are 4 percent for cooperatives and 5.5 percent to 7.5 percent for individuals.

One major agricultural landmark in Syria is the Euphrates dam. The dam has, apart from producing 800 MW of electric power, allowed the irrigation and improvement of up to 31,000 hectares. The area will reach 81,000 hectares by the end of 1980 but will still be short of the 640,000 hectares that could be improved and irrigated when all complementary projects related to the Euphrates dam are completed. The dam has also contributed largely in the provision of potable water to Hama and the new city of Al Thawra, which now has a population of 100,000.

So far five years have passed since the first newly irrigated land under the Euphrates dam project was cultivated. The first irrigated land stretch was 21,000 hectares. The completion of the first phase of the Euphrates dam produced 15 new villages with 6,708 houses. The second phase of the scheme covers a 27,000 hectare area and is being carried out by Roma

Grimex. The new areas under improvement extend 60 kilometres along the Euphrates banks east and west of Al Riqqa. Of these 3,400 hectares were completed in 1978 and were redistributed to their original owners while the rest is now held by cooperatives. Exceptionally high yields were registered in these new areas, mostly in cotton cultivation as between 300 and 500 kilos of cotton were produced per dunum.

Table I
Public Sector Industrial
Labour Force

	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
State Establishment for Textile Industries	23,506	24,563	21,829	21,050	25,350
State Establishment for Food Industries	3,091	5,206	5,068	4,716	5,172
State Establishment for Chemical Industries	5,060	4,488	5,568	6,438	7,955
State Establishment for Engineering Works	4,859	6,109	6,316	6,511	9,164
State Establishment for Cement	2,701	3,234	5,300	5,382	5,765
State Sugar Establishment	1,872	1,912	1,930	2,922	4,285
Total	40,089	45,512	46,011	47,054	57,691

Another area under the Euphrates basin scheme, Bir Hashem comprises 10,000 hectares and is scheduled for completion next year. The Bir Hashem land improvement works are carried out by the General Irrigation Installation Company SARICO. The national company was reportedly contracted at half the fees required by foreign contractors. The World Bank, which takes part in the finance, had reportedly objected to the choice of contractor claiming that it had little experience and limited ability to complete a project of such scale.

More rugged terrain improvement is carried out by the State Establishment for the Euphrates Dam which is currently working on 21,000 hectares west of Maskana. The work at Maskana includes:

An electric pumping station with a 36 cubic metre per second throughput carrying water from Lake Assad to the newly reclaimed areas. The station is operative and is already being used to irrigate part of the area.

50 kilometres of main canals carrying water at capacities ranging between 5 and 36 cubic metres per second.

400 kilometres of supported canals.

2,300 kilometres of covered irrigation canals.

150 kilometres of open canals.

660 kilometres of paved roads.

This is added to the main land reclamation operations sought under the scheme. So far 4,000 hectares out of the 21,000 hectares covered by the project have been completed and were cultivated last year while another 2,300 hectares were completed this year and will be put to farming in due course. The remaining area is scheduled for completion next year.

Meanwhile the Euphrates Basin Administration Establishment, commissioned with the reclamation of 640,000 hectares, has completed studies for 100,000 hectares in the Bulaikh basin and nearly finished detailed studies for other areas east of Maskana and is considering work on areas west of Maskana, in the direction of Hama and some 120,000 hectares in the lower Euphrates basin.

Other projects under way include the reclamation of 50,000 hectares on the right bank of the Euphrates from Deir Ez Zor to Boukamal, 37,000 hectares in Bulaikh north of Raqqa and 50,000 hectares west of Maskana.

Allocations for industry under the 1978 state investment programme amounted to SL 4,613.393 million. This year, allocations were at SL 3,832.288 million while a series of projects are still in progress under the fourth Five Year Development Plan (1976-80). Tables 2 and 3 provide a detailed run-down of industrial projects that were completed this year and others that are scheduled for completion before the year closes. Projects under table 2 have secured 9,460 employment opportunities at total investment cost of SL 1,219 million. By the end of this month another 13 projects will be completed at a cost of SL 2,089 million and will provide 6,766 employment opportunities. In 1978, 83 industrial projects were launched.

Interviewed last August by Tishrin, Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Halabi said major emphasis is now being placed in the public sector on industrial costing and proper control and reporting of costs on the one hand and quality control on the other. Administrative changes have covered 18 public sector establishments most of which in the textile industry and others in toiletries, metal works and tractor assembly lines. Premier Halabi said the administrative changes were taken after productive deficiencies and low rentability was depicted in these companies' records. Productive deficiencies often resulted from improper reporting of real industrial costs, a requirement stressed by the state and established by law as of January 1, 1979. The state has in fact been particularly active in providing qualified financial controllers for all public sector industrial establishments. Quality control is made possible through the product specifications ordinance of October 7, 1978 based on legislative decree 248. Under the ordinance a state committee is supposed to maintain control over intermediate and semi-processed products as well as the final output, through subordinate agencies in every branch of industry.

Further enhancing public sector participation, or more accurately predominance, Production Councils were formed for the various industrial establishments under law No 6 dated August 4, 1979. The councils were designed to:

- Promulgate annual plans for the establishments;
- Suggest methods of attaining added productivity and draft the proper policies in the light of such suggestions;
- Establish efficiency standards and mobilise the work force to attain these standards;
- Correct deficiencies in the previous year's production plan. The councils were expected to coordinate their efforts with the directors and the boards of state establishments without any interlapping authorities.

The application, since 1977, of a system of incentives and rewards was largely responsible for effective increases in productivity of up to 25 percent, mostly in the textile industry, where strict adherence to the scheme was reported. Varying degrees of success have also been felt in the foodstuff industries and the chemical industries after the adoption, this year, of the state system of rewards and incentives.

Despite the obvious emphasis on the public sector, the Syrian authorities have shown concern for the private sector, with the understanding that the state should maintain the upper hand in controlling production and pricing policies. There were other areas strictly forbidden for private ventures. State support to private industries has taken the form of soft loans through specialised banks and the sale of state-owned industrial sites on easy terms. Interest on industrial loans has not exceeded 3 percent in recent years and payment for industrial terrain was usually spread over a 10 year period.

Table 2
Industrial Projects Completed
by The Public Sector Between
1/1/'79 and 20/8/'79

Project	Cost (Million SL)	Labour Employed	Capacity
Aleppo Menswear Project	113	2,600	1.9 million units/yr
Aleppo Ladies' Garments Project	113	2,600	1.9 million units/yr
Wool Carding and Washing Project, Hama	28	100	2,000 tonnes/yr
Provision of 37,000 Spinning Jennies in Deir Ez Zor	110	1,100	7,500 tonnes/yr
Homs Dairy Products Project Development	12	—	—
Al Riqqa Sugar Project	180	600	Processes 4,000 tonnes of sugar beet daily
Maskana Sugar Project	180	600	Processes 4,000 tonnes of sugar beet daily
Adra Cement Project	325	1,200	2,000 tonnes daily
Aleppo Glass Works	158	660	25,400 tonnes of plain glass panes/yr 14,400 tonnes of glass bottles 100,000 m ² of high resistance glass
Total	1,219	9,460	

Table 3
Public Sector Industrial Projects
Due for Completion Before 31/12/'79

Project	Cost (SL Million)	Workers	Capacity
Provision of 75,000 Spinning Jennies in Jebela	2.3	1,150	1,100 tonnes of yarn/yr
Expansion of Al Ahliya Spinning Company, Aleppo with 10,000 Jennies	40	—	1,100 tonnes of woollen yarn/yr
Wool Carding Project, Hama	15	690	2,000 tonnes/yr
Can Company Project, Damascus and Idlib	10	n.a.	43 million cans/yr
Tal Salhab Sugar Plant (will be completed, but not operational this year)	180	600	Will process 4,000 tonnes of sugar beet daily
Sheikh Said Cement Project, Aleppo	500	1,000	3,000 tonnes/yr
Al Musliriyya Second Cement Plant, Aleppo	150	350	1,000 tonnes/yr
Chemical Detergents Plant, Adra	75	260	38,000 tonnes/yr
Baby Food Project	20	105	1,500 tonnes/yr
Tirbil Superphosphate Plant, Homs	800	930	450,000 tonnes/yr
Damascus Glass Works	158	663	25,000 flat glass panes 14,400 tonnes of glass bottles
Aleppo Cables Plant	118	1,018	8,600 tonnes of assorted cables
Total	2,068.3	6,766	

Total Syrian imports from Third World countries in 1978 rose to SL 765 million compared to SL 344 million in 1974, while exports reached SL 94 million last year. Exports to the Arab countries rose to SL 562 million last year compared to SL 401 million in 1974. Syrian imports from Arab countries however dropped. Syrian exports to Eastern bloc countries rose to SL 932 million last year against SL 904 million in 1974. Speaking to Tishrin, the Director of Planning at the Ministry of Economy and Trade, Suhail Jaafari, said the State Establishment for Industrial Equipment and Installations Trading had increased its imports this year to SL 334 million, compared to SL 206 million last year. Imports of chemical and food products this year were valued at SL 822 million while exports of agricultural products were worth SL 38 million compared to SL 26 million last year. The State Establishment for Trading in Construction Material and Iron Products this year imported SL 1,085 million worth compared to SL 549 million last year. The increased imports of textiles this year were valued at SL 230 million and of pharmaceuticals SL 307 million.

CSO: 4820

TUNISIA

RETURN OF THOSE CLOSE TO HABIB ACHOUR SEEN AS SHIFT IN GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE

Paris AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 19-25 Nov 79 p 27

[Article by 'Abd-al-Latif al-Furati: "Is It the Return of Those Who Were the Objects of Anger?"]

[Text] The composition of the new government raises some questions. Two factors make it surprising: Mohamed Ennaceur's admission into the government as minister of social affairs, and Mohamed Fitouri's continuation in the office of minister of foreign affairs.

Mohamed Ennaceur has returned to the position from which he resigned in late December 1977 in protest of the dismissal of Tahar Belkhodja from the post of minister of interior because of his reported link with the [Tunisian General] Federation of Labor [UGTT]. The changes made in the government in late 1977 preceded by 1 month the outbreak of 26 January 1978 and the riots which led to the death of 45 people and the imprisonment of the majority of the old leadership of the UGTT--notably Habib Achour--who were brought before the court on the charge of being instrumental in those incidents.

Mohammed Fitouri's continued occupation of his post came as a surprise, since everyone had expected another foreign minister and numerous reports appeared suggesting this.

Several other posts in the government were also changed. Mohamed Jomaa, the only minister to lose the legislative elections, has left the government. Jomaa is considered to be among those who are close to Abdallah Farhat, the former minister of defense and one of the mainstays of the administration before he was dismissed by President Habib Bourguiba last September following the congress of the ruling Destourian Party.

Minister of Cultural Affairs Mohamed Yaalaoui has also left the government. Following the merger of the posts of minister of information and minister of cultural affairs, the combined position was assigned to Fouad Mbazaa, who was formerly minister of public health. The Ministry of Information has been without a minister since Chadli Klibi was elected secretary general of the Arab League last June.

The Ministry of Interior was assigned to Othman Kechrid, the former minister in charge of relations with the National Assembly and the government secretary general. Othman Kechrid is known for being so remote from the various political currents that he was not a candidate either for membership in the administration or in the legislative elections. The minister of interior, Dr Dhaoui Hannablia, was transferred to the post of minister of health.

A large number of technocrats joined the government, and changes were made in a number of the technical ministries, including the Ministries of Equipment, Agriculture, Transport and Communications, Industry and the Secretariat General. In addition, two new secretary of state (minister of state) positions were created, one for posts and the other for employment and administrative reform; and two secretary of state positions were abolished, one in the Ministry of Social Affairs and the other in the Ministry of Equipment.

The questions being raised by observers are these:

Does the return of Mohamed Ennaceur mean that the causes which brought about his resignation no longer exist? Or does it mean that talks which may now be in progress aimed at forming a new mixed leadership made up of trade-unionists close to Habib Achour and the trade-unionists who comprise the current leadership are on the verge of completion and are en route to producing a compromise solution and achieving the release of the imprisoned unionists?

Observers also ask if the decision to retain Mohamed Fitouri as foreign minister is final, or if it is linked to the convening of the Arab Foreign Ministers Conference and the summit conference.

Another question concerns, first, the withdrawal of the post of minister of interior from Dr Dhaoui Hannablia, who took over this position in December 1977 and confronted the incidents of January 1978 while occupying it; second, the withdrawal of the Ministry of Social Affairs from Mohamed Jomaa (who was charged with confronting the social disturbances and changing his stand on the unions which were still in the control of Habib Achour); and third, the expulsion of Abdallah Farhat, who was dismissed from his position as minister of defense by Habib Bourguiba. Do these changes mean that the government wishes to forget the past and begin a new chapter which someone like Othman Kechrid, a peaceable man and a man who maintained a good relationship with the UGTT at the time of his resignation in 1977 prior to the disturbances, can render successful?

Another question pertains to Mohamed Chaker, who has joined the government as secretary of state for administrative reform, is well known for his activities in the Destourian Party, and is among those who call for an opening up of politics to the various movements, as well as being the son of a historic leader who died as a martyr in the resistance. Does Chaker's

admission into the government represent a step in the direction of more openness in domestic politics now that the possibility of achieving a national reconciliation at the level of the unions has begun to emerge, and some government circles--even within the Employers Organization--feel that, the paralysis which has struck the unions may be harmful in the medium and long terms because of the potential this paralysis creates for an explosion brought about by the absence of an opposing side capable of affecting or being affected by the demands of the labor base."

Finally, analysts feel that the ministers who resigned or were dismissed in late 1977--who have been described with various epithets and have been the target of the wrath of the authorities and party leaders--are apparently in the process of regaining their status. Thus, the return of Mohamed Ennaceur; and prior to that the Destourian Socialist Party's nomination of Mongi Kooli, the former minister of health who resigned out of solidarity with Tahar Belkhodja, in the legislative elections; as well as former Foreign Minister Habib Chatti's election as secretary general of the Islamic Congress, and Tahar Belkhodja's apparent appointment to a high-ranking diplomatic post--all these things are indications of the government's desire to put an end to the past.

8591

CSO: 4402

TUNISIA

TUNISIAN ISLAMIC LEADER GIVES INTERVIEW TO PARIS PAPER

LD311359 PARIS LE MATIN in French 22-23 Dec 79 p 9 LD

[Interview with Hassan Ghodbani in Paris by Jacques de Vernisy, undated: "One of the Leaders of the Islamist Movement in Tunisia": "Tunisian Islamists in the Dock"]

[Text] "I wish to make a point of addressing a solemn appeal to the authorities, who are acting directly at variance with the Tunisian people's interests in this affair [the banning of the Muslim magazine AL-MUJTAMA and imprisonment of its editor]," Hassan Ghodbani, who is currently in Paris, told LE MATIN. "We are accused of exposing the country to all expansionist designs and being against the Tunisian nation," he added. "But being Muslim in no way means that we are not patriots and do not defend our country."

Hassan Ghodbani displays a conviction, a passion, sometimes even a violence which cannot be explained solely by his youth--he is 28--or his profession as a lawyer.

Thousands of Tunisians have heard his sermons at the Sidi Mehrez Mosque (or on cassette recordings). Before 1970 he was an avowed Marxist, but 9 years ago he was overtaken by a sudden and brutal conversion: "First, because I visited the communist countries and was shocked by the tremendous contradictions between reality and Marxist theses; additionally, because of the problem of death--for a long time I believed that death was the end, but now I know that it is the beginning; and finally, because I read the Koran, the Sunna and the Hadiths (the Sunna and the Hadiths are the teachings stemming from the sayings of the prophet Muhamad which form the Islamic tradition).

Rather than an integrist, Ghodbani describes himself as a "fundamentalist" and believes that the Koran has no need of modification. "Polygamy exists everywhere," he said. "Islam merely regulates it. Homosexuals? Of course they must be killed, as prostitutes must also be if they are married. And it is necessary to cut off the hands of thieves, except those who steal to eat."

Apart from communism--"our 100-percent enemy"--Ghodbani has the other betes noires: Colonel al-Qadhdhafi and the West. Al-Qadhdhafi has committed the sin of "repudiating the Sunna and the Hadith rules of conduct because they allegedly bear too much of an imprint of a certain age." And the Libyan colonel "defends Arab nationalism, to which we are opposed," Ghodbani states. "The Arab nation does not exist. We are for Islam and the 900 million Muslims who are all behind the Imam Khomeyni. The Shi'ite-Sunnite distinction no longer exists. Khomeyni has all Muslims behind him."

The Tehran hostages? "They are not diplomats. They are spies, criminals acting against Islam. Of course I approve of their being put on trial."

And the West? "The West has tortured and exploited us for centuries. We have only one weapon against them--Islam, which makes it possible to settle all problems: Religious, political, economic and social. Our action," Ghodbani adds, "cannot be confined to the political field alone. It is a civilization struggle. And whatever people may say, the Islamic phenomenon has already won."

CSO: 4400

'TAP': NOUIRA DENOUNCES RELIGIOUS HYPOCRITES

LD291632 Tunis TAP in English 1400 GMT 29 Dec 79 LD

[Text] Tunis, Dec 29, (TAP)--Addressing the parliament Friday during the closing of budget debates, Tunisia's premier, Mr Hedi Nouira, denounced the religious contestants and hypocrites who by claiming their belonging to Islam are following political objectives.

In this regard, the Tunisian premier stated: Our people is deeply faithful and our country has been for many years a pole of religious and cilizational radiance.

The state efforts show that religion has never been neglected in the construction of a healthy society and in the education of the individual through the strengthening of his faith and belief in God.

We can mention as a proof in this respect, the continuous effort made for the building of mosques. Thus, the number of mosques which was only of 793 will reach 1,614 at the beginning of 1980. These mosques are places of devotions and show the (?right way to be) good and preach the love of fellow beings.

But if these mosques become tribunes for fiery speeches and contest under any form and if one tries to spread hatred in them and to extol fanaticism and autarchy, this leads to conflicts and disunion.

The problem is not therefore at the level of faith. It is rather a matter of conscience in front of a scourge which may sooner or later degenerate into a kind of civil war. This is a fact that the state cannot ignore, taking into account the fact that it is in charge of warranting security to the faithful and preserving public order before the situation worsens.

We cannot turn a blind eye and allow the mosques which were constructed for the practice of religion be transformed into arenas where Muslims fight one another because of issues having no relation whatsoever with faith. All the more so because Islam banished all kinds of go-betweens between the believer and God.

Our state and our people are Muslim. We are all believers by the nature of our Islamic regime and culture and no one can give himself the right to judge the manner with which we practice our religion and even less the right to put the latter under his thumb.

In Islam, there is neither church nor order which claim to exercise guardianship on faith, spirit or on behaviour.

Can we forget that the Islamic world cohesion has been disintegrated and that its unity has been broken by the same people who hindered under highly arguable interpretations in order to conceal their nostalgia for paganism and who were unwilling to accept the fact that the peoples of Darius ended by embracing a religion imported from Arabia.

From the beginning, this was a political conflict having something to do with the state and society.

It is, therefore, important for these agitators to deeply mediate over this bitter reality which is that the Arab-Islamic world is still underdeveloped, divided and still dependent for its development and even for its subsistence from this West and that it is provoking and which doesn't hide its nostalgia and its decadent hegemony.

If we consider that the Arabs have been defeated four times by Israel, it is important for us to deeply mediate over this issue, to draw lessons from it and to preserve ourselves from the bad consequences to which the extremist attitudes which are showing here and there can lead us to face.

We are strongly yearning for the progress of the Islamic world after the lethargy and decadence of whole centuries of obscurantism and humiliation. Now that thanks to God we acceded to independence and that we dispose riches that need to be rationally exploited, is it reasonable to neglect our imperative duty to develop ourselves in order to be able to deal with a conflict which may spread discord and troubles among our race and waste our energies?

It is our duty as sincere Muslims to strike the alarm bell. We reckon that the situation is serious. This seriousness is not only found in the spirit of crusades which is still animating certain nostalgics but also in these responsible behaviours which aim at creating discord, jeopardizing security and serving religion with ends that are often irrelevant for its purposes.

Our people is faithful and peaceful. No conflict, no struggle between factions trouble our quietude, and we will not tolerate that so-called instigators jeopardize our faith and security or try to lure us in a multitude of conflicts which, though they seem to be a showing of solidarity, are in reality only deviation and alienation.

It is compulsory to warrant and preserve liberty. For this end, the best means consists in not abusing because playing with liberty is only a kind

of very short amusement. However, nothing is more dangerous for liberty than the fact that it is praised by some orators whose spiritual fathers set up a political regime and adopted a behaviour totally in contradiction with the Islamic rules.

In its capacity as Islam's guarantee as the constitution stipulates it, the state assumes the responsibility of protecting Islam and its institutions in Tunisia and preserving generations from subversive and extremist currents.

CSO: 4420

TUNISIA

IMPROVEMENT OF ECONOMIC SITUATION DISCUSSED

Paris AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 19-25 Nov 79 p 38

[Article: "The Stage of Standing on Both Feet"]

[Text] Tunisian planning experts, as well as the international economic agencies, feel that 1979 marked an important event in Tunisian economic life, inasmuch as the country's per capita income passed \$1,000 (445 dinars, or \$1,137) during this year. For a country like Tunisia, the \$1,000 mark in per capita income represents the dividing line between backwardness and a stage in which the country can stand on its own two feet and strive for a future which will lead it toward development with swifter and firmer steps.

The planning experts and some economists feel that this figure indicates that Tunisia has been able to depend on itself more and more in implementing its development programs. This has prompted some countries and financial organizations to decrease their aid substantially, on the basis that Tunisia is no longer on the list of countries in need of preferential loans and aid, although effort must be made in other directions since poverty is still widespread and the annual per capita income is only \$350 or even \$250.* The organizations and countries which have decreased their assistance include the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and its specialized agencies, the United States, Sweden, and others.

However, Tunisian economists do not share this view. They believe that even though the Tunisian economy has indeed achieved excellent statistics during recent years, distinguished by the rise in the Gross Domestic Product and the growth in the average annual per capita income, it is still delicate and needs support in order to reach a good stage, possibly in the mid-1980's when the anticipated large projects have been achieved in industry, the infrastructure and the development of agricultural production--projects which call for high financial and technological intensity requiring concentrated aid.

*What is probably meant is the average income of a poor person.

Despite the fact that the Tunisian economy has developed rapidly in recent years, part of the development in the per capita income is attributable to oil exports which have risen in terms of both production and price during the past few years and months.

Nevertheless, this should not detract from the value and importance of the efforts that have enabled the country to achieve a growth rate which reached as high as 19 percent at times during 1972 and stabilized between 7.5 and 8 percent thereafter. Meanwhile, the average growth rate in the undeveloped countries from 1970 to 1978 ranged between 4.9 and 6.2 percent, according to the annual report of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Thus, the volume of Tunisia's loans from the World Bank and the Agency for International Development (AID) was no more than \$99.5 million, which represents less than 1 percent of the loans granted by these organizations from 1 July 1978 to the end of June 1979 (\$15 million to 80 countries).

With these loans, Tunisia has implemented projects including the following:

1. A building development project in the two largest Tunisian cities, Tunis and Sfax. The loan for this project, which was for \$19 million, permitted the implementation of low-cost housing services--and a small amount of nonrepayable assistance--to poor residents of these two cities. A second project was approved in early 1978 with the goal of improving the personal conditions for 1,000 of the residents of the two cities.
2. The financing for the second project is \$26.5 million. This sum is for implementation of the second stage of a project to improve and enlarge sewers, again in the cities of Tunis and Sfax. The project will cost \$77.5 million.
3. The third project involves furnishing drinking water to rural areas and small towns. The project will serve around 600,000 people and will cost a total of \$72 million, of which the World Bank has provided \$25 million.
4. The fourth project, which involves a loan of \$19 million, is aimed at providing the basic needs of persons with limited incomes in the two main cities, Tunis and Sfax; renewing five sections of the cities; raising the standard of educational facilities in them; assisting their businessmen; and establishing a special organization to get rid of refuse. The project will cost \$45 million.

Thus, it is evident that the monetary loans from the World Bank are limited in amount and do not include productive sectors so much as they are aimed at supply sectors affecting the infrastructure.

The reason that infrastructure projects have been chosen is because Tunisia is forced to resort to the world financial market to provide the necessary financing for its projects, and this market usually provides loans only for productive projects and to countries which are able to repay their loans.

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